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[00:00:00.570] - Kianna Bermudez

It is How to be an Askable Adult. My name is Kianna Bermudez. I'll be your facilitator today. And I am the program support and outreach manager for the Greater Maryland region. So I'll explain what all of that means here in a second. But for those of you who may or may not be familiar with [MENTOR Maryland | DC](#), I'll tell you a little bit about us. We have a national organization that's [MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership](#). We are a local affiliate of that. There are 25 local affiliates and we are one of those. We are MENTOR Maryland | DC. So we serve Maryland and DC and we hope to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships across not only the country, but especially focusing in here in Maryland and DC. So we want to close that mentoring gap. We want to make sure that young people feel supported and have caring adults in their lives. And so we do that by supporting mentoring programs, whether that be through trainings like this, our regional roundtables, and just making sure that you all have the resources you need to get all of that support. So with MENTOR Maryland DC, we do have a few offerings and a few different resources for y'all.

[00:01:17.500] - Kianna Bermudez

We're going to include these slides in an email follow up. So all of these links will be clickable and you'll get those there. We share this as a PDF, but just want to highlight some of these for you all to keep your eye on. The second one, [free program consulting and technical assistance](#). I actually saw some of our consultants on the call. Hello. Thank you for being here. We provide free consultation to any program that could be. If you all are looking for a recruitment plan, if you're looking to strengthen your training, if you're looking to build a program from scratch, we do free consultation. And the best way to get to that is that link there. Again, I'm going to share this at the end. We also have our [Mentoring Connector](#), which is a way that if you were to literally just go into Google and type in how do I find a mentor for my young person or how do I start mentoring? The first link that comes up is MENTOR's Mentoring Connector. It is a database that pulls from your location, the closest mentoring programs from your location and to be in that, if you're a mentoring program that wants to be in that, that's something you can apply for and you can have access to as well.

[00:02:22.030] - Kianna Bermudez

We also have lots of [regional roundtables](#), which is where we grab folks from the same counties and areas to galvanize around different issues and different things. We want to focus on and ensure that we're all in alignment and then trainings like this. So we do a lot of things. We want to make sure you all are all pulled into those. So if you have any questions about those, let us know. Again, we'll share this at the end as well. I know you all are no stranger to virtual meetings, but just going over some logistics per usual, please remain muted unless we're sharing out loud, just so we can minimize distractions. Please use the chat for any comments, questions, aha moments. If you know of additional resources, feel free to throw those in there. And then, of course, if I'm calling you on you all or want you all to engage, please engage. I would love for y'all to engage, and then your things should be set to everyone. But if you have any



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specific questions for myself or Renee, who is also in the meeting today as our process facilitator, you can also direct those directly to us.

[00:03:30.370] - Kianna Bermudez

Feel free to use the raise your hand function, and we also have an evaluation that you'll get at the end. Please fill that out. We'd love to hear any feedback you all might have, but any questions, we'll have time at the end for questions and discussions as well. All right, so before we jump in, we're just going to talk about some of our goals here, some of our standards, and we'll get into the meat and potatoes. So the goal of MENTOR Maryland | DC in this training is really just ensuring that one of our overall goals is to create community wherever we can. That's one of the biggest things we do. We really do believe that community is the cure and the foundation for learning, for being seen, for being heard, being understood. And we know this is what, most importantly, our youth crave from us more than anything else. So we're going to talk a little bit about that today. But in order to do that, we have some community standards. So just want to quickly go over this. This is going to help us ground in our space today. Community standard number one is that our community is open to all.

[00:04:38.170] - Kianna Bermudez

We also, within that, want to acknowledge that there is deep seated racism, sexism, homo and transphobia, misogyny, ableism, and all these things are very pervasive in our country and in our society. We want to make sure that you all know that we stand against these isms and actively work to this aim, especially with our youth. This means that we must acknowledge that we also approach our work differently and beautifully within that. Our second community standard is to share openly. Not only sharing openly, but listening more openly and being open to when you're sharing might hurt. And what we mean by that is understanding that as we get into some content that might be a little more sensitive, one person's like, yes, that was so great. Aha. Moment might be someone else's trigger. So just keep this in mind and be open if you ever receive that kind of feedback. Our third community standard is being generous with positive assumptions, but do not be afraid to ask genuine questions. So we've all heard the anecdote to assume positive intentions, so we ask that you also do that here. But this does not mean that impact can't be harmful, which is why we ask that if we're feeling a certain way to make sure you're turning to wonder and turning to questions.

[00:05:53.010] - Kianna Bermudez

So instead of just making an assumption, turning to I wonder why they said that, or I wonder why they feel that way and letting yourself sit in it that way. Our fourth community standard is no matter your role here today, you are a host. This is one of our favorites here at Maryland DC. This space is owned by all of us. We're all hosts here, meaning we all have the ability to make everyone feel great in the space. We can approach this space with openness and warmth and create a beautiful space where we can all enjoy and be a part of. This is all of our responsibility. I like to say what you put in is what you get out. And so as



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long as you're all engaging and coming into the space in a way that we're all getting something great out of it, you all have a role in that. Fifth community standards. We do not endeavor to create safer, comfortable spaces, but rather brave spaces where discomfort can be explored and beliefs and practices challenged. So we know, we've all heard learning and growth is at the edge of our comfort zone, which means something might not feel comfortable at times.

[00:06:56.070] - Kianna Bermudez

It also doesn't mean we're in danger. So let's make sure we're looking for those lessons in our emotions, in our reactions, and when those things feel a little uncomfortable. All right, we're almost there, team. Our 6th community standards is we want this community and experience to be supportive and educational, but also fun. So bring your full present self is welcome here. We want you to be yourself here and make sure you're also having a little bit of fun here today. And last but not least, no fixing, saving, advising, or correcting each other. This is actually taken directly from one of our favorite tools, which is the touchstone for developing trust framework. This is pretty self explanatory, but if you do feel the need to deliver any feedback, just ask her permission first and make sure you're listening first. Make sure we're always leading with that listening. So thank you all for listening and walking with me through these community standards. In the spirit of transparency, we just want to let everyone know that if any of our staff feels that there's a violation of these standards, we do have the right to remove those or that individual.

[00:08:00.650] - Kianna Bermudez

But of course, with the opportunity to speak one on one with our team for resolution first. And if you have any questions about these standards during or after the session or maybe need to report something or just have a question about it, please make sure you're messaging myself or Renee, who's also on this call, messaging one of our team members, or you can email us as well. All right, let's get into it. So that's me. My name is Kianna Bermudez, and I'm going to tell you a little bit about myself. So I am the program outreach and support manager here MENTOR Maryland | DC, for the Greater Maryland region. So for all of you folks that are Maryland based across many counties, I'm your main point of contact. Hello. I've been doing youth development and mentoring work for about six years. I'm originally from South Carolina, but I've been in Baltimore also for six years. I'm an AmeriCorps alum. I served from 2017 to 2018. I saw a few other AmeriCorps folks in here. So hello. I am first generation American born, First generation high school and college grad. And my pronouns are she/her. I share all of this to share that this is the lens I bring. These are some of the biases I bring into the space and just want to be open with that. And then, as we mentioned earlier, with all of us being hosted, the space. While my role is the facilitator today, it's to guide the discussion, hold the space, and provide materials for you. I am absolutely not expected to be an expert in being askable in child development or parenting or having all the answers. So just want to make sure that you all know that this is a space where we're all learning in. And if we have any questions specifically about askable adult, feel free to ask me. But if I don't know, I'll make sure I find the answer. And we also have more resources over with the Vermont network, which we'll talk a little bit about here soon. But Renee should be dropping a chat with some more research and resources here in the chat.



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[00:09:54.910] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, so today, our learning objectives by the end of the session, we will be able to reflect on youth voices and experiences, identify qualities of askable adults, explore skill building tools for better relationships and practice communication and listening skills. Does that sound good to everyone? Awesome. And how we're going to do that. Our agenda today we're starting off with a welcome and intro, which we're doing right now. We're going to jump into what makes an askable adult move on to reflecting on some of our experiences, chat about the four askable adult skill areas, which is where we're going to have most of our time today. Explore some possibilities and actions, give you all some resources to walk home with, and then have some time for us to close out with some questions and discussion. Again, this is a hefty training, so please do what you need to. Take care of yourself. I'll be doing the same. I have some drinks and snacks here, so let's be gentle with one another and just hold space for one another. All right, so why are we doing this? What does an askable adult even mean? So I briefly mentioned the Vermont Network. This workshop was actually created by the Vermont Network after a 2017 survey of 584 Vermont Youth, where the majority of young people said that the number one solution, like their top solution to coping with various anxieties they had in their lives, would be having access to more supportive and askable adults.

[00:11:27.690] - Kianna Bermudez

So in this survey, children youth identified all sorts of concerns that stress them out in their lives. That was anywhere from drug and alcohol use, poverty, sexism and harassment, body shaming, bullying, homophobia, anything you can think of. But when they asked what would help, the young people repeatedly said that the number one solution would be more adults they could confide in. So we know children and youth are more resilient to stress and adversity when in meaningful relationships with at least one trusting, affirming adult. This is especially critical for young people who are working to develop a positive sense of self in a culture that often devalues them based on their identity, their ability, their background or status. So we want to make sure that we're equipping adults like all of us, to be more askable and supportive for children and youth, because that supports their healing and resiliency for all youth, including those who've experienced trauma and toxic stress. So that's the why. That's why we're here today. We're here to make sure that we're becoming those askable adults that young people have said that they really want and really need. All right, so we're going to start off with a little story here.

[00:12:34.210] - Kianna Bermudez

Let's see if this works. As we're listening to the story, just keep in mind, what do you notice? We're going to chat about it and let me know if you can hear this. Can you hear this?

[00:12:54.300] - Renee Angleo-Mauk



We can't hear it. When you shared your screen, can you click the button that says share sound? Bottom left.

[00:13:01.980] - Kianna Bermudez

Bottom left. Bottom left. I don't see it.

[00:13:05.740] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

So press share screen again, and then the bottom left should be a button that says share sound.

[00:13:21.450] - Kianna Bermudez

I am struggling. Let me stop. Oh, hello. I see all your faces now. Thank you, Eli. All right. And now I don't even see the share screen video. Renee, can you help?

[00:13:41.310] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

Yes. So, do you see share screen?

[00:13:44.840] - Kianna Bermudez

Yes, I do. Now I'm pulling up.

[00:13:48.530] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

So at the bottom, your sound, I found it. Your sound optimized for video clip. If you need to do that, too.

[00:13:54.770] - Kianna Bermudez

Okay, cool. Got it. Okay, I'm going to see yourself. Okay. And let's back it up.

[00:14:03.990] - Video

Hi, I'm Alexa.

[00:14:05.840] - Video

Hi, I'm Mado.

[00:14:07.830] - Video



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So what would you tell other adults? What do they need to know about how to help youth feel comfortable?

[00:14:13.610] - Video

That maybe listen to the people who are talking to them and just be understanding and ask questions? Because I know that for myself, when people ask questions to me, it helps me understand where they're at, because sometimes adults will just say when they don't actually understand you, and then you keep going, and then they can't follow you. So just like asking questions is important. When you were growing up, were there any askable adults in your community that you felt you could turn to?

[00:14:54.710] - Video

It's a good question. I don't know that. I really feel like when I was nine years old, I had as many people that I could trust as you can. I think as I got older, there were, like, some of my counselors at summer camp, and then, I don't know, I think it makes me feel like I want to cry a little bit. Part of what I really love about the way that your parents have chosen to raise you is that I think you really understand your feelings a lot. And it's easy for you to be able to name what you're feeling and talk about it and even just know that you're feeling really frustrated with your brother and be able to ask for help and all that. I think it's really incredible gift. And it's part of why I like spending time with you, because you do know how to talk about your feelings. And I think it's just such an important skill to have, because knowing how we're feeling actually helps us have healthy ways of dealing with that, as opposed to ways of dealing with our feelings that might hurt other folks or hurt ourselves.

[00:15:55.770] - Video

It just feels really important to me. I think I feel glad to be a person like that in your life and glad that you special being who I love, feels like you have a lot of support from folks who really see and love you. And everybody deserves that. Yeah.

[00:16:16.530] - Video

All adults can strengthen relationships with the young people in their lives. Learn how to become a more askable adult by visiting the Vermont Network website@vtnetwork.org,

[00:16:29.590] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, so in that story, what did y'all know? What is something you noticed that Maru said about what makes an adult askable for them? You can unmute. You can let me know in the chat.

[00:16:46.750] - Attendee



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I guess a good way to sum it up is a certain level of comfortability. It's easier said than done to get a child to talk to an adult in, I guess, a fairly mature manner, but it does require a lot of genuine patience. And if you have that, they'll open themselves up to you. It's really about communication and trust that's really good.

[00:17:19.020] - Kianna Bermudez

Anyone else?

[00:17:24.020] - Attendee

I would posit that consistency as well because I wouldn't expect after meeting with a young person once or twice for them to divulge everything. But if you keep showing up and then they see that you're a consistent and dependable person in their sphere, then slowly but surely, I'm sure they would be more comfortable with evolving whatever they need to want to with you.

[00:18:01.760] - Kianna Bermudez

That's good.

[00:18:07.200] - Attendee

In the clip, it's on, like she was saying, just to ask questions directly also to the kids.

[00:18:13.220] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah. So making sure that they have agency in that.

[00:18:17.540] - Attendee

And then from my own personal experience, I feel like sometimes, I think sometimes it helps if you make yourself a bit vulnerable. Like if I, for example, talking about struggles, I have my own family or something, then just to show, like, you're not alone, maybe

[00:18:31.640] - Attendee

That's really good. One or two last thoughts, anyone in the chat?

[00:18:52.790] - Attendee

So I do like how she mentioned instead of saying, as the adult saying, because I do feel like even when I talk to my mentees or my daughter, when you say or you have a lot going on, it kind of seems like you're



brushing them off, like you're really not listening. So I like how she said that. And then when you do ask questions, it does allow you to direct your attention solely on them because I know with programming, a lot can be going on. So when, you know, spend that time asking questions. It's like that direct attention that I feel like they need. So that was good to me. That stood out. Absolutely.

[00:19:42.630] - Attendee

I just wanted to add, this is Kim Jolly from VLP. And someone just said this more or less in the chat. And I think Tiffany said this, and I don't think Maru said it directly, but just listening. All of the things that we're talking about are like how you are an active listener, whether you're in a meeting or whatever. And I don't think kids are used to adults, as Tiffany said, one on one at all traditionally, and then having that one on one where the adult is asking questions of the kid, not just dispensing advice, but seeing how they feel and actively listening to them.

[00:20:30.330] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, that's good. Any other last thoughts before we move on? All right, so keep those thoughts in mind. Thank you, Renee. So moving on to the next slide. We are sorry, my computer is freezing. So looking at these wordles, we actually have a few we're going to look through. I just want you all to look through them and try to think through anything that stands out to you. These were collected through those surveyed young people that we talked about earlier when they were asked who were your askable adults? What do you like to talk about to adults and what do those people look like to you? How would you describe them? So these are the words that they came up with there. So we're just going to quickly look through those, spend about maybe 30 seconds or so on each one, and then we will come back and we can move on to the next wordle. So we're just going to look through all three of them together.

[00:23:05.720] - Kianna Bermudez

All right. And last wordle. All right. We'll take a few seconds there. Okay. Also, we're doing a little screen switch, so it might look a little funky for 2 seconds. Awesome. All right, so again, these images reflect how surveyed Vermont Youth describe their askable adults again in the chat or feel free to unmute. Do any of these words surprise you, inspire you, resonate with you?

[00:24:05.640] - Attendee

My favorite one is tea. I'm not sure if that means in my mind I'm like, we're spilling tea together.

[00:24:16.940] - Kianna Bermudez

Anyone else?



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[00:24:26.750] - Attendee

Nobody. You'll be surprised. A lot of young people think they don't have support for no one to talk to. Hi, this is Cassidy.

[00:24:57.690] - Attendee

Can I ask a question?

[00:24:59.780] - Kianna Bermudez

Of course.

[00:25:01.280] - Attendee

Okay. So I apologize. I had a call, so I had to step off. Am I correct in saying we're picking out terms from this photo that stand out to us?

[00:25:11.940] - Kianna Bermudez

Yes, we're picking through Sorry, my screen share is, like, really bugging right now. You all we're picking through. There were three different wordles, and this is how young people described their askable adult or their caring adult. So we're picking words that either resonate with us, surprised us. Just anything we want to chat about there. Okay.

[00:25:34.240] - Attendee

I would like to highlight the term something wrong at home. The reason why is because I was in a workshop and I just kind of got kind of overwhelmed because they were talking about all these problems that stem from at home. And I know a lot of times we can think that when there's problems at home that a child is kind of. I don't want to say a lost cause, but we start to think very pessimistic about their outcomes and what they will have access to. But it stands out to me because it's our job as adults in other environments for them to offset whatever is wrong at home. So I just want to say something wrong at home is not like a death sentence or something like that. Because even if there is something wrong at home, we can offset that, and that's what we're there to do.

[00:26:27.660] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah.

[00:26:36.850] - Attendee



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Hello? Can you guys hear me?

[00:26:38.950] - Kianna Bermudez

Yes, we can hear you.

[00:26:40.390] - Attendee

Okay. Yeah, I just kind of stepped on as well. I was in a prior meeting, but like you said, some of the words that resonate and stand out. I don't know how this pertains to what you guys were speaking on before, but I was looking at small issues and big issues and that stuck out to me because I think a lot of times kids, these words are relative. So a kid might say that I have small issues or what have you, but a lot of small issues can turn into a big issue. And I just feel like it's about meeting the young people where they are and just trying to just listen and understand as it pertains to their issues or what have you. Because very big issues may not be something that is so overwhelming, but they may feel like it's something that's overwhelming because of the lack of experience that they have had in their lifetime. So those stuck out to me.

[00:27:37.110] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, I think it's also really cool to see the big, like, how it's so varied, right. It goes from we talk about dogs and my real first love and sports and whatever to some really heavy things, right. And the range there is really cool to see, too. Anyone else? Is there anything in the chat that I might have missed? I'm going to try to restart my share thing because it's looking funky on my end, but anything in the chat? Yeah, sorry, Renee, go ahead.

[00:28:19.850] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

Oh, yeah. I'll read the chat while you're taking care of that, Linda. Noted. I love the conflict of ask questions and don't ask questions, which I think is a good point. Right? It's all about how you do it, taking into consideration the nature of your relationship with a young person and your permission to ask questions and not the juxtaposition between anything and nothing. Right. It's that sometimes it feels like young people are. What's the word I'm thinking about? I'm thinking of OPSA. I don't know the word I'm thinking about. They don't say what they mean, but it can be both things at the same time. Right. A lot of the words relate to me for a role I have, or it's a subject I oftentimes talk to young people about. So it's ringing true. People's experiences with young people.

[00:29:31.160] - Kianna Bermudez

Sorry, it keeps pausing my share whenever I go to share it with you guys, and I don't know why. It was really fun.



[00:29:41.580] - Attendee

I was going to say that that whole feeling of not feeling like something's wrong with you, to echo, I think somebody was saying something wrong at home, but I think a lot of times, young people, I know I did when I was growing up, you would internalize things, and you think that there's something wrong with you for one reason or another. And to be able to. It would have been helpful for me to have somebody in my corner when I was younger to tell me, like, there's nothing wrong with you. We're just in a kind of weird and kooky world, and everybody's trying to find their way. So approaching young people with that understanding, or at the very least, I guess reconciling some of your own stuff before you work with young people is certainly helpful. I think it can help build some bridges of understanding.

[00:30:59.970] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, Renee, I'm sorry. As you know, my computer is messing up. Would you be able to share the screen and I'll pick up on facilitating?

[00:31:13.030] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

Yes.

[00:31:14.010] - Kianna Bermudez

Awesome. Thank you. Bye bye. Cool. Thank you all for rocking with us, even though I'm struggling over here. All right. So oftentimes, we often get the question, what is an askable adult? I know when I was sharing this training with folks, that was the most common question. People are like, what does that even mean? So again, this is going to be a very interactive training. It's going to be me asking you lots of questions. So, first question, when you all heard that, when you all heard the term askable adult. What did you think that meant?

[00:31:56.850] - Attendee

I would say it's accurate because this has not. I would say it sounded like the adult was approachable, which not every adult is and not every human being is, but something along those lines.

[00:32:15.130] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, I see that in the chat, too. Approachable. Someone who's approachable. That's good. What did you say I should expect for the time? Go ahead. I'm sorry.

[00:32:32.040] - Attendee



I was saying I would use the word relatable.

[00:32:35.590] - Kianna Bermudez

That's good. Devin. Welcoming, interested. Awesome. All right, so we're going to define it. So an askable adult is someone who is approachable, as y'all mentioned, is someone who is easy for children and youth to talk to about anything that's on their mind. And Renee, if you can go back to the previous slide, there should have been a thank you. Approachable and easy to talk to about any topic. They can talk to you about anything that's on their mind. Askable adults are committed to having strong, effective, affirming relationships with young people, using positive communication to develop trust and connectedness, and some qualities that young people actually defined. So in those two boxes there, you'll see some of those. That includes patience, consistency, respectfulness, helpfulness, kindness, attentiveness, trustworthiness, light heartedness, open mindedness, non judgment, knowledgeable. All of these different things are things that young people were like. This makes an adult askable to me and approachable to me in that way. And again, just want to reiterate the importance of approachability. As you mentioned, being an askable adult means you are approachable and easy for children and youth to talk to about literally anything that's on their mind, no matter how out There it is.

[00:33:56.180] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, so we're going to reflect on our own experiences and what askable adulting has meant to us in our lives. So we're going to split up into some breakout groups and we're going to answer some questions. I do want to preface this by sharing that some of these experience might be difficult for some people. So remember, you do what is most comfortable for you. You can share out loud in your group if it's more comfortable. You can write things down to yourself, you can share aloud, you can think internally, whatever is best for you. But we're going to take about five or so minutes in groups and then we're going to come back to share. Okay, so we're going to go through and answer these questions as we get these group breakout groups, set.

[00:34:43.430] - Renee Angleo-Mauk

The rooms up for you guys. You'll automatically move into the groups, when they close, it'll give you or when you'll get a message going to close. Then I'll have a countdown of 60 seconds, and it should automatically move you into the group. So we will see you in about six minutes. And I'm going to share this screen to your breakout room so you can see the questions. So we'll see you soon.

[00:35:09.770] - Kianna Bermudez

Perfect. Thanks, Renee.

[00:35:17.340] - Attendee



The first question, I think we were all a little stumped thinking about who do we have as an adult? Some said no. Others said when we were little, kids were really meant to be seen and not heard. So we had to think about that one. And then we asked, who was your askable adult? And I wrote in like an elder, some said friends, coworkers, some mentors and things like that. We made it to question three of what made or makes them askable for you. And actually, I'm not sure if we got to type in everything on that last third one. But, yeah, I think there were good reflection questions, because as an adult, we have to think about, we have to put ourselves in these situations so we can start thinking about the children and see how they can relate to us and what we need to do and look like for them in order for them to be approachable for us to be approachable for them.

[00:36:23.470] - Kianna Bermudez

Absolutely. Renewing that empathy. And what I heard you say is a lot of young people's experience. Right? A lot of young people say they don't have askable adults. So how can we make sure that we're renewing that empathy for that? That's really good. All right, two more folks.

[00:36:43.770] - Attendee

I lost connection to the Zoom for a moment, but coming back, a common theme with everybody in my breakout group was that the askable adults in our life tended to not be in a formal education setting. Not necessarily our teachers, but camp counselors and coaches and babysitters.

[00:37:07.810] - Kianna Bermudez

Good. That's a really good observation. All right, one more person.

[00:37:17.640] - Attendee

Coming from living on the south and west sides of Chicago. As a young child, we didn't have counselors, therapists, things like that. And our askable adults were other children or older children, which wasn't always good. And I didn't have an askable adult, and that's what has led me into this work, into helping other children and other organizations.

[00:37:58.190] - Kianna Bermudez

Thank you for the work that you do and working to become one of the askable adults that many of us needed.

[00:38:04.120] - Attendee

If I can, I guess, contribute my response, I can boil it down to, I guess, growing up on the spectrum, I had a lot of difficulty in school and communicating. And, I mean, I still have that problem now, but as cliché as



it may sound, on top of my parents, most of my askable adults were paraprofessionals or teachers or doctors or anything like that, and also just additional family members. I felt like I learned a lot from adults growing up because I feel like when you're a child, you look up to adults as, I guess, like guides to be a better person, so to say. And I think by the time I had matured and gone to high school and even college, I was in a slightly better place to where I didn't necessarily need them. But I still had to advance in spite of my difficulty progressing in a world that to this day doesn't fully understand how neurodivergent people work. But I think we're getting there ever so slowly.

[00:39:32.180] - Kianna Bermudez

Thank you for sharing that, Eli.

[00:39:35.300] - Attendee

You're welcome.

[00:39:37.860] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, well, thank you all for being vulnerable and getting into that sometimes uncomfy activity and sharing with one another and with us. So we're going to get into the meat, which is our four askable adult skill areas. So this is pulled from our askable adult skill building toolkit, which was created by the Vermont Network. We're going to drop that toolkit in the chat if you guys want to ever do a really deep dive on that, this is going to be a little surface level, giving you guys a good idea of what everything is. And we're going to focus in on those four skill areas, which are building trust and affirming relationships. I'm sorry, building trusting, affirming relationships, committing to consistent connections, committing to caring, communication, and being a curious copilot. So our first one is building trusting and affirming relationships. So we're going to listen to a little story as long as our audio works again. This time and again, want you guys just to listen out for anything that stands out to you, specifically, keeping in mind anything you hear about trust and connection in their relationship.

[00:40:49.420] - Video

I'm Natanya and I'm Gabriel's mom. Can you talk about a time when you felt like I was there for you?

[00:40:55.690] - Video

I was at a friend's house. It was the first time I had to sleep over there. We were having a great time until we had to mellow down and go to sleep. The sleeping arrangement was just much different than what I was used to. I really wasn't feeling comfortable, and so I went upstairs and contacted you.

[00:41:17.450] - Video



So it was pretty late at night when you called me.

[00:41:19.480] - Video

It was like two in the morning, right? You didn't really ask any questions, and you came over and picked me up without any judgment.

[00:41:29.760] - Video

So is there something that I've said to you over time, at any point that made you feel like you knew that you could call me at that time and ask me to pick you up?

[00:41:39.490] - Video

There wouldn't be any judgment. If I ever needed really anything from you that you could do, you would come do it, especially like that. I feel like you proved it over time, and that was one of the reasons that I called you. And then just try and go through it, pull us through.

[00:42:00.790] - Video

How, then, would you describe our relationship?

[00:42:05.060] - Video

I feel like there's a strong bond, almost, where we trust each other a lot, but there are some times when it's a bit shaky and we can get angry at each other but every time, we get that relationship back, and we can trust each other a lot more. And do you feel like it's gotten better over time? I feel like over time, it was a bit shaky, and now it's a good. It's getting stronger. Yeah.

[00:42:41.540] - Video

Awesome. I'm glad to hear that. Love you.

[00:42:44.710] - Video

Yeah, I love you, too.

[00:42:47.600] - Video

All adults can strengthen relationships with the young people in sleep over there.



[00:42:54.980] - Kianna Bermudez

I think that's a really sweet one between Gabriel and his mom, Natanya. So what did y'all notice about their trust and connection? What did y'all notice about how trust and connection was built there?

[00:43:10.950] - Attendee

I mean, it's pretty similar to how a lot of relationships are built with children and their parents in that it does take a while, but with proper care and attention, you'll get somewhere a lot faster. That makes sense.

[00:43:28.970] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah.

[00:43:36.290] - Attendee

Trusting the relationship, even if there are points of tension, for things to kind of go back as they were or even grow stronger. So I guess, like, the trust to disagree about things and to build upon those disagreements or to see past them or whatever points of tension there are.

[00:44:02.750] - Kianna Bermudez

And he mentioned the non judgment piece quite a few times, too, which I thought was really important. I don't want to say that's not common, but I think that we probably all have experiences when we were young people with adults who we felt like we couldn't go to because of fear of judgment. That's huge. Yeah.

[00:44:20.680] - Attendee

I noticed that there was a sense of trust with the child and the adult because he was very open to say maybe at some point it wasn't all open and trustworthy, but then, as time went on, I noticed that I could really trust this person, and he felt it, but he was also able to vocalize that. And for a Young person, even an adult, I think that matters a lot.

[00:44:49.580] - Kianna Bermudez

Absolutely. That's really good. Marcella.

[00:44:54.910] - Attendee



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Sorry. I was going to say, one of the key things that stuck out to me was he said to his mom, he said, the reason I was willing to come to you, I felt that I could, was because you were consistent, basically, like I've been to you before. You didn't let me down. So consistency is big.

[00:45:11.750] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, you've done it before. I know you'll do it again. Good. So, trust. That's what we heard them talk a lot about. And so just want to level set, make sure we have the same definition here. Trust is the assured reliance on character, ability, strength and integrity of another person or thing. And within that, to trust someone is to feel safe being vulnerable with them. And youth are more likely to come to us with their concerns if they trust us. So let's talk about ways to build trust. Tips for doing that. There's quite a few. I'm going to go through these and try to explain them a little more. But of course, respect. R-E-S-P-E-C-T. As the song said, principle. So youth identify feeling respected as that being central to having effective relationships with adults. Adults who are askable for children and youth, they hold respect as a core value. So that should be how we're entering any space immediately with respect. And so a good way to remind yourself of this and to ground yourself of this is asking yourself, would I treat another adult this way? Whether that be talking down, whether that be questioning a decision, whether that be not believing an experience.

[00:46:34.270] - Kianna Bermudez

We should always make sure that we are treating young people in the same way we would treat an adult and coming to them with that same level of respect. We should keep things confidential. Keep confidential things confidential. And if you're not able to do that, we know that there are stipulations around that. We need to be honest about that up front. As an example, just sharing. I'm a mandated reporter of child abuse, which means that if you share something with me that makes me concerned for your safety, I might have to report it. Or if that does happen after they've shared that with you, being honest about that. Hey, this makes me a little worried for you and I have to report this, but I really appreciate you sharing this with me and trusting me with that. Making sure we're keeping things confidential to the best of our abilities. Unless we're not able to do that due to a safety concern and being honest with that. Check your own agenda. Even well intentioned adults can get lost in our own agenda. So periodically asking ourselves, why? Why are you in a relationship with young people? Is it because it's making yourself feel good? Or is it because what is the reason here? What is your real why?

[00:47:47.430] - Kianna Bermudez

Allowing space. So, remembering that young people are in the process of developing their identities and values, making sure we're giving youth a space to reach their own decisions and information they need to do so in an educated way. So again, going back to respect and believing youth when they tell you who they are. Trusting relationships are formed when youth understand that they're not required to share your values in order to be loved by you. I'm going to repeat that because that's a big one. Trusting relationships



are formed when youth understand that they are not required to share your values in order to be loved and respected by you. A good rule of thumb for this one is trying silence. Letting them take control, letting them have the space and letting them have the majority of that space sharing power. So within this one, keeping in mind that remembering that our society grants more credibility, authority and power to adults, especially more to adults than youth. So an example in this one is making sure you're including young people in decision making, watching our assumptions, so paying close attention to your assumptions and how you react to what young people do or tell you.

[00:49:14.160] - Kianna Bermudez

So, based on your observations, making sure you're asking questions, listening carefully, learning and being open to asking questions like do you want to just talk? And we listen and pulling away from making and watching those assumptions, pausing, reflecting and letting go of judgment. So it's as important to pay attention to your own reactions as it is to listen to youth. If you find yourself having a really strong feeling, make sure you're pausing and reflecting before you're reacting or responding. So again, going back to kind of what we said with respect, how would you respond if this was another adult? Are you making an unhelpful judgment in this moment? Would you be judging another adult in the same way that you're judging this young person? If they're sharing this with you, keep your promises and show up. So don't make a promise if you can't keep it. And make sure you are being consistent. That's something that Devin you highlighted, making sure you're being consistent here. So if you're keeping promises, making sure you're doing it, making sure you're showing up for them, whether that be showing up for a project they're excited for an event or whatever that is, but making sure you're being consistent in that way.

[00:50:26.600] - Kianna Bermudez

And last but not least, not giving up because as we know, building trust takes time. All right, so those were some basic tips around building trust and affirming relationships. We're going to do a quick little breakout reflection. Renee, I think you might have skipped a slide there. There we go. We're going to go into some breakout groups again. Again, this is going to be a really interactive training, as y'all are seeing, since it's a long one. Make sure y'all are keeping warm. So what is something you're going to chat about? What's something that is doable for you to increase your askability? So working on building those trusting and referring relationships and what is something that's a stretch for you to do that we're going to break out for about. We'll make this one about four ish minutes, four or five minutes, and then we'll come back and I'll have you all share out again.

[00:51:29.210] - Kianna Bermudez

Welcome back. All Right, you're all trickling in. This time. I'm going to have two people share out. You can either share out a reflection from this, a direct answer to this, whatever you are comfortable with. Two people.



[00:51:51.670] - Attendee

In our group, one thing we said that is very doable is being there, like consistency, like showing up. That's the easier part. And then the harder part, I think, is withholding judgment and just accepting that what you think how things should be done is not necessarily how other people think about that- like that.

[00:52:10.650] - Kianna Bermudez

Absolutely. It's really easy for us as the adults to be like, well, I know it's right because I've done it already. Thanks, Marcus, for sharing that and being vulnerable with that. All right, second person.

[00:52:30.260] - Attendee

I know I said in my group, the language is a stretch for know. Of course, after I catch myself, I try to go beyond as far as explaining the reasoning behind it, but that is a stretch for me, the language.

[00:52:52.220] - Kianna Bermudez

Thank you for sharing. All right, so we've delved a little bit into how to build trusting and affirming relationships. Now we're going to move on to committing to consistent connections. If you can't tell, we love hearing young people's stories, so we're going to listen to another young person's story again, listen to what you might notice specifically around connection and consistency.

[00:53:21.690] - Video

My name is Laurie. Thomas comes to our house and he works with the horses and he walks our dog, Skye. There was something very different about him. We just kind of started talking to each other. Yeah just randomly we would be doing something around the house of the horses and Thomas would be working with the horses and we'd have a minute and then just start talking to each other, and I at least felt that it was just this kind of instant connection. Watching him with the horses has been incredible. Incredible. They watch for him. My dog, who is this really quirky character, adores Thomas, and they have a connection, too. Sky just thinks like, you're one of them. He's like, oh, here comes my buddy. They walk at the same pace.

[00:54:19.790] - Video

He's my best friend. I prefer animals over people, too.

[00:54:24.910] - Video



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You can see that with him, with the horses. They so accept him and they trust him, which is very unusual. They're not trusting by nature. If there was something that was really troubling you, would you feel comfortable coming to me and asking me if we could talk about it?

[00:54:44.010] - Video

Yeah.

[00:54:46.390] - Video

Why do you think?

[00:54:48.710] - Video

I don't know. I just feel really comfortable talking to you. It's like a safe space.

[00:54:54.510] - Video

And I feel that way about you, too. It's sort of like, I think that what's really essential in our friendship is that there's no judgment. And I think one of the things that we connected with is we both like working with wood. So when Thomas fell out of the sky, I was doing some projects on elk buildings. When he came to work with the horses, he would check in to see what I was doing, and he always had these suggestions that totally blew me away, because I think I know what I'm doing. And then one time I had smashed my finger with a hammer because the nail was, it wouldn't go in the wall. And he said, you know, if you drill a pilot hole first, that won't happen. I find myself, I'm learning stuff from him, too, and he has a really creative mind, and he comes up with these ideas that are like, really?

[00:55:54.880] - Video

I don't hear many good compliments about myself. It's nice to hear some good.

[00:56:00.830] - Video

Do you believe it?

[00:56:02.060] - Video

I do.

[00:56:03.630] - Video



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I hope you do, because I mean it. I really do. I think you're incredibly special. And it was like he just came into my life unexpectedly. And I feel that he's helped me broaden the way I look at things. And it's been a real joy to watch him growing and changing. Do you feel you've changed since you started coming?

[00:56:31.770] - Video

I have a lot. I can control my anger better.

[00:56:35.930] - Video

Yeah, I've noticed that about you. You smile a lot.

[00:56:40.590] - Video

Yeah.

[00:56:43.710] - Video

All adults can strengthen relationships with the young people in their lives. Learn how to become-

[00:56:50.670] - Kianna Bermudez

All right. As we were listening to Thomas and Lori's story. Just some quick takeaways. You can throw them in the chat or unmute. What's something you notice about their connection or their consistency?

[00:57:10.330] - Attendee

It sounded like they were on the same level with each other.

[00:57:14.890] - Kianna Bermudez

It's really good. Yes. I have some people in the chat saying it was mutual. They were open and friendly towards one another. I also think it was really cool how she mentioned, and I was learning from you, it was reciprocal. Yes. They enjoyed each other's company, was able to learn. There's respect. All very good. Awesome. We'll delve into how sounds like an easy environment to casually meet and then build a deeper connection. That's really good, Marcus, talking about how environments are important. All right, let's chat about how do we commit to consistent. First, I want to start with that first little dot there. You matter to me. That is the message that all children, all youth, all young people in our lives should get from you. No matter what your relationship is to them, no matter whether you're their parent, their teacher, their youth worker, their neighbor, a family member, you're the random person that they say hi to, walking down the street as you walk your dog. Every young person should believe that they matter and that they matter to you. And so this is the message that should guide all of your interactions with young people in your life,



telling them that they matter to you and showing up for them over and over again with that consistent piece.

[00:58:47.530] - Kianna Bermudez

So why are connections important? As we know, children and youth who have consistent and strong connections to adults in their families and in their communities are more likely to have a solid sense of belonging, a solid sense of security. We also know that connections foster well being across racial, ethnic, cultural, geographic, and socioeconomic characteristics as well. So connections are really the core to what ensure that young people feel supported and have a sense of belonging and feel included in their communities. All right, so what does that look like? What is building relationships with consistent connections look like? So, we know that, as we mentioned, being consistent, predictable, and dependable, and safe are important. And while all of that is important, there's also three very predictable stages of relationships between adult and young people. The first is checking it out for safety. So young people often, unfortunately, expect disappointment. They have experienced it before. They expect to be disappointed. They expect to be abandoned. They expect for there to be a lack of genuineness going back to those agendas that adults often have. And because of that, they also expect negative outcomes. So by young people checking it out for safety and moving slow, in that way, it actually is a protection thing.

[01:00:13.750] - Kianna Bermudez

It helps them ensure that their physical and emotional safety by offering and we can contribute to ensuring that they feel physically and emotional safety by offering comfortable and accepting environments. I thought someone in the chat mentioned that it seemed like a really good place for them to meet and build a stronger connection, that is a comfortable and accepting environment, and ensuring that those environments also honor individual differences. And in that space, in that checking it out for safety, that's a really good time for us to encourage youth to ask for what they need. The second predictable stage of a relationship with a young person is testing limits. So youth often seek to learn about your role in their lives and ensure that you accept them for who they are. So with that in mind, definitely be forgiving of a youth desire for reassurance. And as you all know, all of you all, I'm assuming, have worked with young people or have young people in your lives. Young people will test you and they are retesting you to explore how consistent you are, how predictable you are, and how dependable you are. So ensuring that we're consistently responding with unconditional positive regard.

[01:01:26.590] - Kianna Bermudez

And the idea that, hey, I'm not going to change my attitude based on something you say or something you do, I am here for you unconditionally. This relationship is here unconditionally. Whether you say something really mean or you do something that might be hurtful, that doesn't change that you matter to me. And the last one is genuineness. So, as we know, when trust is built in small moments over time, that then creates that predictable and dependable connection, that trust then gets deeper that we talked about



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earlier. So that means anxiety is decreasing, communication is smoother, feedback is happening, modeling has more meaning. And so then once we get through them checking it out for safety, them testing the limits, and then being like, wow, this is a safe space. They actually do care about me. No matter what I do or say, then we reach that level of genuineness where that trust is stronger and communication is smoother, and all of that good stuff. So those are our main stages. Let's move into how do we do that? How do we build those consistent connections? So here's some quick tips. I'll go a little deeper into these if you're taking notes, so paying attention, make sure you're just focused on the young person when you're with them.

[01:02:44.360] - Kianna Bermudez

I'm sure all of you have had an experience with a friend, family member, maybe on a bad date where you're in front of someone and they are not there, they are on their phone the whole time, we're not paying attention. You do not feel cared for in that moment. You do not feel seen. So in that same way, we want to make sure that we are focusing on children and youth when they're talking about things that matter to them. That means not having our phones out, make sure we're making eye contact, and most importantly, believing them. Making sure that they're talking to us about their favorite video game. Show an interest in it, ask questions, pay attention. Follow up even when you're not around. So what that means is make sure you're maintaining contact. Don't just let it be like, oh, I'll see you once a month, it's fine. But make sure that you're checking in. If you know something. If they're going through something challenging, follow up with them. Shoot them a quick text. Just being like, hey, I know you had that hard test this week. How'd it go? Don't wait for them to bring it up, but feel free to send a quick message to just remind them that you are present, you do remember, and you are there.

[01:03:50.060] - Kianna Bermudez

I know personally, I actually will set reminders on my phone, like in my calendar, like so and so's birthday, so and so's test date, so and so's X, Y and Z, just because it helps me remember and be intentional about following up, especially when those dates are important to people. Make time for lightness. We know that we all feel more connected and have those deeper connections when it's not always just this year. So we also feel like we can have fun with people. So make sure you're bringing in humor, you're bringing in fun, and you are creating opportunities for laughter as well. Find satisfaction in doing things with or for and with them. So that really just goes back to showing up for them. Youth need to believe that we value spending time with them, whether that be showing up like you might end up having to sit on some cold bleachers and watch some very long game, but I promise you that young person will be thrilled to see you there. And then also melding your interest in making sure that they feel supported and feel shown up for shifting levels of support. This is a big one.

[01:04:55.790] - Kianna Bermudez



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So when youth are struggling, make sure you're giving them support. Make sure you're giving support. When young people are struggling and when they're coasting, take note of that. And that's okay. You can give them less support in that moment and not hover, but make sure you're shifting those levels of support as needed. And that also means you have to go back to paying attention and knowing when those things are happening and you're probably sensing a theme here as this was showed up in our last one. But don't give up. Consistency matters and we know it. Again, builds time and takes time to build that consistency, but making sure that we're consistent in doing that, so unsimilar to Last time, we're going to actually, I'm going to ask you all to just quickly in the chat, share maybe three connection tips you find most important. You can quickly unmute if that's easier for you, but if you're like, man, I really like sharing music with a young person or oh, I find that this question always gets them talking. Again, I am not the only expert here. I'm not an expert here. This is your space. So please share any resources, share anything. Three connection tips that you find most important, or one or two.

[01:06:23.700] - Attendee

I do have at least one as far as connection tips go, for lack of a better term, am not particularly a fan of what politicians have to say about people, but I think a US president once said trust but verify. And I think it's important that we trust those who we're taking influence from, but they need to verify what they mean because you can easily jump into something not knowing the full ramifications of what's about to happen. So in that sense, connecting with people who can verify you is very important.

[01:07:16.740] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, that's good. Thank you, Eli. In the chat, I also see a few others when sensing frustration, asking them when they find themselves what they find the most annoying in their lives. That's big. So being able to see what annoys them. Authenticity, transparency, sense of humor, not shying away from difficult topics. That's huge. Evie. Active listening, cooking, sports, music, non judgment, making time for lightness. That's good. Talking about nothing, the favorite things. I love that. Jessica. That's my favorite too. When I moved to Baltimore, kids were really quick to show me Baltimore music and Baltimore rappers, and that was always fun. They would like quiz me and stuff. So being able to also play on me, not knowing things and then being excited to teach me things. All right, sounds like y'all are pros. Yes. Congratulating them. Thanks, Philip. All right, so we talked about committing to consistent connections. We're going to jump into our third. Yes, Ray, any other things that they have in Common? Shows, anime, things like that, connecting with them. These are all great folks moving into our third skill area. We're almost there. You all are troopers committing to caring communication.

[01:08:36.700] - Kianna Bermudez

So there's a quick little quote here. Do you want to vent or do you want advice? Just learning now after 40 years on Earth, that this might be the most important question to ask whenever a friend or loved one is upset. Marcella, I'm glad you're saying that, because I'm about to ask you all in the chat or unmute, you



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all are pros at this because I've asked you this almost every other slide. I have a question for you. Have you ever tried this approach with a youth or maybe someone else? If so, was it helpful to you? If not, do you think it might be helpful, especially in communicating with youth? Renee says, yes, me and my husband do this. That's awesome.

[01:09:17.500] - Attendee

Yes. My daughters and I, because now they are adults, I have to realize that the relationship is Different. So I do have to ask permission. Am I a listener here or I can give feedback.

[01:09:37.520] - Kianna Bermudez

That's good. Yeah. One of my friends is really good at this. She'll always ask before I even start, she's like, am I in listening mode or am I in fixing mode?

[01:09:50.660] - Attendee

Well, maybe not argue, but I would kind of give a bit of a- what's the word? Well, I would just say that I think it's good to vent about a lot of things because at least in my experience, it makes people a lot healthier when they get something off their chest. But there does come a point where if you vent too long, then maybe the people around you will end up getting upset. So it's important to vent to a certain extent, but then it comes a point where you just got to step back and say, okay, I didn't mean everything I said there.

[01:10:28.800] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, on the other end, it sounds like you're saying, also making sure, asking if people have the capacity to listen. Not everyone's always in the best headspace to listen when we want to vent.

[01:10:40.420] - Attendee

Another thing I was going to add is one of the great things that I've learned throughout my time as a mom of a teenager, as well as mentoring teen moms, is the availability that we have to influence them. So not necessarily, of course, we tend to tell them what to do because that's adulthood, but more so influencing. So when you turn the table and listen and kind of like, adhere to their needs and all of that we talked about and you talked about and transfer that into influencing when you're giving advice, when you're trying to let them know, hey, this is not the way that you might be going, but in a non judgmental way, the same way that influencers go out there and talk, I think the same way. And it works very well for me because my son, for example, he is very open to just bring to me things that sometimes I'm like, that's too much. But it's that sense of trust. I think that becoming an influencer in your lives is definitely something that I try to do.



[01:11:59.600] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, that's good.

[01:12:03.200] - Attendee

I'm sorry. Sometimes times with my group, too, I ask permission if I notice the conversation is going left just to bring it back. Right. I'll ask permission. I said, excuse me, can I give some feedback or have a say right here just to get them back on track without discouraging them from.

[01:12:31.080] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah. What I'm hearing in a lot of what you all are saying is asking permission and letting people have agency over the conversation. Right. Not assuming you know what's best, not assuming you know the best direction, but ensuring that it's a collaborative and caring communication. So, spoiler, we're going to talk about caring communication next. This is our third tip, I believe our third thing. So these are our tips to engaging in caring communication with the young people in your life. So effective communication between adult and youth is critical to building connections. Both how adults communicate with youth and what they communicate about are important. And so here's just some quick little tidbits. Again, these are the main guys, but I'll be going a little deeper into each one if you're taking notes. So number one is put away judgment. In that survey that we've talked about earlier, the number one concern that young people shared was in having relationships with adults was judgment. So this is a huge one, putting away that judgment when young people are maybe in that testing phase of a relationship, or even if they just feel comfortable in sharing something with you that might make you a little uncomfortable.

[01:13:43.100] - Kianna Bermudez

Put away that judgment. There's not a place for that here. Make sure you're putting that away. Asking what they need and then listening deeply. So this is kind of what a lot of you all were reiterating. So young people just want to be listened to and they want to be heard. So you don't always have to jump into problem solving. You can just directly ask, hey, what do you want right now? Or what do you need right now? Do you need me to listen? Do you need me to problem solve with you? Most of the time, it's just listening weight. This is a really good one. We're going to get a little deeper into this on the next slide, but it stands for why am I talking? We should be asking ourselves this a lot. So as adults, we tend to enjoy chatting. We think we have a lot of important information to share and all the information is very important, and that's usually not the case. So just some quick tips and something we're going to jump into again here in a little bit is trying a one to three ratio where young people are driving the conversation.

[01:14:42.060] - Kianna Bermudez



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An example of that would be, if you're talking for 15 minutes, are you talking more than five minutes? Hopefully the answer is no. Leaning in. So, being interested and learning, be interested and learn. So be curious about what matters most right now to them. That could be pop culture. That could be things going on in their lives, in their school and their communities. Ask questions and then learn from them. And make sure you're showing that you're learning from them. Talk about boundaries and limits. Young people actually really appreciate knowing your limitations. So tell them up front that models honesty, that models dependability, that models predictability and integrity. And so it helps them be able to talk about their own boundaries. So if you're setting that example and saying, hey, this is one of my boundaries. Just wanted to share that with you up front, that then gives them a space to be able to share any boundaries that they may have as well. That could be boundaries like connecting on social media, that could be what time of day or what the best ways are to communicate with them or with yourself. But modeling, that is a really good way to step into that, supporting their processes and remembering yours.

[01:15:54.260] - Kianna Bermudez

So, as we know, mistakes are a necessary part of learning, but we should be able to praise youth for their hard work, whether they succeed or not, being a source of appraisal and honesty. So young people really appreciate positive and honest feedback. Affirmation is important and constructive feedback. So making sure you're allowing space for that and being honest when those things come up, understanding what's happening in their lives. This kind of goes back to being. Leaning in and being interested in learning, but listen to music that they like, watch the shows that are important to them. Kind of like what Ray said with, if they like anime, maybe try watching an anime show and being like, hey, I watched that episode you told me about. Young people love when we try to connect with them and understanding what's happening in their lives. It also goes back to asking lots of questions, revisiting difficult conversations in small doses. This is a big one. So this shows you care and that you're able to give conversations room to grow and evolve until each of you are more comfortable to have those conversations. Maybe they shared something really big, but they're like, I don't want to talk about that anymore.

[01:17:05.900] - Kianna Bermudez

That's okay. Wait until they are. And last but not least, again, don't give up. Communication is an ongoing process. This is something that we are consistently building on to make sure that you are not giving up when it comes to caring communication. All right, so, as promised, we're going to practice. Wait, the why am I talking situation instead of breakout rooms? This time I'm actually going to ask for two volunteers. If you could do the raise your hand feature in here. Thank you, Eli. Need one more? I didn't even tell y'all what you're doing. You are already volunteering. I appreciate y'all. One more volunteer. Thank you, Marcus. All right, so we're going to pin y'all to our screens. Everyone can see you, and one of you is going to choose to be an adult. And one of you is going to choose to be a young person. We're into a little role play situation. Adult. Okay, so, Marcus and Eli, do either of you have a preference on being the adult or the young person?



[01:18:27.710] - Attendee

I could be the young person, if that's okay.

[01:18:30.430] - Kianna Bermudez

Awesome. Marcus, you cool? Being the adult?

[01:18:32.710] - Attendee

For sure.

[01:18:33.680] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, so, Marcus, I'm talking to you. I need you to try to think of a topic that adults love to lecture on. Some tips, some suggestions. Limiting social media and screen time, wearing seatbelts, using your phone while driving. Something that you feel comfortable doing a little luxury situation on. So, Marcus, your role here is you feel like you have something really important to tell Eli, and you have to try to give him as much information you can about this topic. Got it?

[01:19:08.590] - Attendee

Sounds good.

[01:19:09.620] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, Eli, you are hearing this lecture and put yourself in the shoes of a young person. You don't want to hear about this, you get it. And also, you're trying to voice your opinion, but they have a lot of information to share. All right, that's your role here. Got it?

[01:19:31.000] - Attendee

I'll do my best.

[01:19:32.400] - Kianna Bermudez

Thank you, Eli, I'm going to go on mute, and we're going to give you all about two to three minutes. Marcus, I'm going to let you share, and we will try to pin y'all to the screen. Maybe everyone can focus on you all. Okay?

[01:19:54.250] - Speaker 6



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All right, go ahead, Eli, really great to see you. And I'm glad we finally get to talk about the topic of doing the homework regularly. And so I just want to know that. I want you to know that it may sound tedious right now for you, but it's actually really important that you do homework frequently and regularly, because if you repeat things over and over again, it just becomes easier. You get more into the habit. And habit formation is a really important thing also in any stage of life, really. I do that. There's things that I struggle with, like, I just need to make a habit out of doing, getting them done. So what I think you should do is especially, you said you're struggling a bit with math. So math is something like, it may seem hard, but just do it. Do the exercise stuff with the simple ones. Do them again and again and again. And that way you build confidence. And if you do the simple things well, then you can move to the harder things and just repeat doing that and it will be so much easier. And you will see, over the long term, you will see impact because you're more engaged. You feel like you know what you're doing and you're more confident that you can get it done. Does that make sense?

[01:20:58.590] - Attendee

I guess so. You are right. I have a hard time with math and a lot of other subjects. It's not even that I don't like doing my homework. It's just more. So I have a hard time paying attention in school. So do you have any ideas that I could, I guess, use for paying attention more?

[01:21:24.870] - Attendee

Yeah. So the number one thing is first, when you go, make sure you get enough sleep. So start with that. Make sure you get plenty of sleep. Then also if you can, see if there's a way for you to have, maybe make sure you're not hungry in class. So maybe make sure you get some snack or something. Maybe pack some snacks also during the day and have breakfast and have snacks during the day.

[01:21:46.190] - Attendee

Well, my mom always gives me healthy snacks, but I don't like healthy snacks. Are you saying I should be eating them more?

[01:21:54.590] - Attendee

Yeah, it's really important to eat healthy snacks. If you just get sugary stuff. Yeah, that would be great for you briefly, but then you get a sugar rush and you focus a lot for like two minutes, and then you crash afterwards. Don't eat the sugar stuff. Eat the healthy Snacks that you're wanting, like the apple, whatever, bread, like all that stuff that's much better for you. So do that. And then maybe also anything you have trouble focusing. You mean specifically during class or during the afternoon? I guess.

[01:22:23.930] - Kianna Bermudez



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Great job, Marcus. With all the information sharing, you took your role well. All right, take two, Marcus, our adult here, you're actually only going to talk for 1 minute out of these three minutes. When you start talking, if you have a phone near you, maybe even set a little stopwatch to time how long you talk. And youth, young person, Eli, you're going to talk about the topic. It could be what we were just talking about, about getting your work done at school. Or you can choose a different topic, but you're actually going to kick us off when Marcus responds, he's only going to have a minute. Sound good?

[01:23:06.680] - Attendee

Sounds good.

[01:23:07.450] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah. Awesome.

[01:23:08.330] - Attendee

All right. I guess I'll start now then. Hello, Mr. Marcus. If it's okay with you, I have a bit of a problem in school. I'm not being bullied or anything, but some of my classmates like to make fun of how I stutter sometimes. I try to answer every question as much as I can, but they snicker behind their backs and I find that kind of insulting a little bit. I don't think that's funny. And sometimes they'll giggle if I don't say a word as fast. And I've tried telling them to stop, but they don't really do much of anything. And I have talked to my teachers and they don't seem to be aware of it at all. So I guess I'm coming to you for advice as far as what I can do about that.

[01:24:09.950] - Attendee

Yeah. Well, thanks for sharing that. Well, let me first ask, is your question more, are you more concerned about reducing, finding ways to reduce the stutter, or is it actually more about making sure it doesn't bother you as much or how to handle the reaction of your classmates?

[01:24:25.790] - Attendee

Well, I am in speech therapy, so I'm working on my stutter. But, yeah, I don't really like how my classmates make fun of me because of that. I'm trying to speak as well as I can, but that issue keeps coming up. And I don't like seeing my classmates still make fun of me for that.

[01:24:48.250] - Attendee

Got you. That makes sense. Well, let me first say that's an experience that many of us go through. I've had times in schoolwork, people are laughing. Me. It feels very bad.



[01:24:58.930] - Attendee

Oh, really?

[01:24:59.810] - Attendee

Yeah. So you're not alone at all. I would say some things that come to my mind is one, is understanding that everyone has something they struggle with. Some people are okay, stuttering is one thing, sure. But some people struggle with some classes, some people struggle with sports. Some people struggle with all kinds of things. Right. So know that you're not alone in this. And that's something where sometimes the reason why people snicker, other people make fun of other people. Sometimes they have problems that they're worried about and they use, like, it's easier to make fun of someone else so that hopefully they are not the ones getting made fun of. So it may not be that they really care about whether you sell it or not. It may just be that they want to make sure that no one focuses on their weaknesses or their problems, and so that's why they do that.

[01:25:49.730] - Attendee

Wow. I never thought of that before. Thank you for the insight, though.

[01:25:56.350] - Attendee

Sure.

[01:25:57.710] - Kianna Bermudez

Great job. Eli and Marcus, everyone. Give them a little clap reaction in the chat. Awesome. Thank you all. All right, so, Eli and Marcus, a lot of it will be up for you, but as people were listening, you all might have picked up on some things, too. Was there anything that you noticed that was particularly hard, maybe differences in how it felt from take one to take two?

[01:26:27.530] - Attendee

I think take two, we got. I mean, I'm only speaking from what I experienced, but I think take two was a bit easier to talk in. I felt like there was an easier groove as far as talking about a subject that people can relate to. I'm not the only one who had a stutter growing up, of course, but I feel like that felt a lot more natural.

[01:26:57.170] - Kianna Bermudez



It immediately, to me, went from take one. Adult was like, I have information to share. It was very lectury to take two was young person was sharing something organically that they wanted to share, which felt more collaborative. RIGHT. Anyone else or Marcus, anything that came up for you.

[01:27:20.890] - Attendee

And it's interesting where if the young person is starting to talk, it's actually easier in some ways because you get time to collect their thoughts and see what specific is the issue and what do they want to talk about as opposed to, if I start, I don't know if anything that I'm saying is landing.

[01:27:39.710] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, you automatically have that buy in. Good people who are watching. Anything that stood out to you, you can throw it in the chat, too.

[01:27:55.820] - Attendee

This is Joanne. I took notes, and I thought it was great how Marcus was able to respond to Eli's question about homework and how to pay attention and just what to do. And sometimes we may not say that or may not know to say that, but I thought that was good for us to hear because homework is a real big issue for youth, especially with the post pandemic and all of the dollars they're throwing to homework. So THANK YOU. That was good.

[01:28:39.180] - Kianna Bermudez

YEAH. In the first scenario, the adult was too chatty. Young person couldn't get a word in. Take one was difficult to listen to. That's funny, but it's real. AND TAKE TWO IS ACTUALLY GOOD. GOOD. ALL RIGHT. AWESOME. SO CARING COMMUNICATION USING OUR WEIGHT TOOL. SO WHY AM I TALKING ASKING OURSELVES THAT? Marcel says she loved how Marcus made things relatable, showed empathy, you're not alone in this. ALL RIGHT, SO WE'RE GOING TO MOVE ON TO OUR FOURTH AND FINAL SKILL AREA. I want to just call out that you all are absolute champs. WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR LIKE AN HOUR AND A HALF AT THIS POINT, AND YOU ALL ARE STILL KICKING IT. AND I APPRECIATE YOU ALL. SO WE'RE ALMOST THERE. WE'RE ON OUR LAST ONE. SO HERE'S A LITTLE QUOTE FOR US. KIDS TALK WHEN WE GIVE THEM OUR FULL, CURIOUS ATTENTION. In order to truly hear them and discern the right size response in the moment, we need to tune into their channel like on an old fashioned radio dial. WE HAVE TO HONE IN ON Just the right spot to tune out the static of our fears, worries, distractions, so we can get the message.

[01:29:58.470] - Kianna Bermudez



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Are they just venting? Are they looking for help? Developing a plan? The best way to do that is to look inside and get to know the static that comes up for us. I often think the best thing we can do to show up for our kids is tend to ourselves, seeking support from friends, colleagues or professionals, especially when we have a hard time removing the static on our own. So before we jump into skill area four, the skill area four is about being a curious copilot, which is how to navigate tricky conversations. It's probably the hardest part of what we're going to do today in the chat or unmute. You all know the drill. What are some tricky topics or conversations that you have with children or youth? What are some tricky conversations for you to have with young people?

[01:30:44.400] - Attendee

I think the trickiest conversation is really answering anything that starts with the question, why? Because children want to know a million things. Sorry? Children want to know a million things all at once. And you don't have the answer immediately. Even after you give it time to think about it, you can't think of a proper answer. So it may happen more often than not when you end up not lying to them, but just kind of saying something that you don't mean in the moment. So it's a tricky conversation, but it's something that always allows for improvement.

[01:31:29.260] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, that's good, Ray. These are all very real. Abuse is really hard. Talk about religion, family dynamics, arbitrary aspects of institutions. Big one. I think relationships, especially when we're working with older young people, they're starting to build relationships. Some of the relationships are really hard. Some of them are going through breakups. Some of them are exploring their identities, whether to stay in school or get a job. Grief. These are great. They're all very tricky and confirmed.

[01:32:10.100] - Attendee

Can I add something regarding the relationship.

[01:32:12.980] - Kianna Bermudez

Please do.

[01:32:14.580] - Attendee

Yeah. One thing I find when young people are asking regarding their relationships, I often will say if, in fact, have they talked to their parents, what did their parents kind of say? Or get suggestions of what their peers are thinking regarding that question that they asked me, it's a little tricky, especially now with the whole gender roles. So that in itself is very tricky because I'm sure if folks have Christian beliefs or Muslim



beliefs, different things, that's going to sway what you say to that young person. So it's just tricky. So kind of just being led by the spirit, what you believe you should be sharing.

[01:33:00.660] - Kianna Bermudez

Absolutely.

[01:33:01.190] - Attendee

It's been my experience.

[01:33:02.980] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah. So what I'm hearing partly of what you're saying is making sure you understand what's going on in their world. What are they hearing from their peers? What are they hearing from family members? How can we make sure that, going back to one of the other tips we talked about, they know that we unconditionally are there for them, regardless of their values or our values and how they may align. That's great. So we're going to talk about how to navigate these tricky conversations a little bit. I'm going to throw, or Renee is going to throw some questions not to answer right now. These are some good ones to write down for later, but just some questions to ponder that relate to the quote we were just talking about. So just talking about some fears and such. Just some good extra homework if you'd like. But let's go into how to be a curious co pilot, how to navigate those tricky situations. So youth do not expect adults to know everything. Surprise. They don't expect us to know everything, but they do appreciate us being honest and giving helpful information. So tips for being a useful resource in the situation.

[01:34:03.740] - Kianna Bermudez

The first is being honest and direct. That is key. Young people want to make sure that if we don't know that, we're being honest about that. Hey, I'm not sure, but I'll find the answer for you. It's okay if you don't know the answer to something or that you don't know what just to say, but be willing to explore. You might be askable, but that does not mean that you know everything. So if you don't know the answer to a question, collaborate with them. Collaborate to finding helpful information together and be comfortable with silent spaces. Just listening and asking questions might be exactly what they need. That might be perfect. Break it down. So when youth are trying to solve a problem, when a young person is trying to solve a problem, help them break it into smaller, more digestible pieces. Help them find their own solutions. You can ask curious questions that could look like, hey, so what could you do differently to tackle this problem? Helping them think through that and be able to tackle it themselves? Rather than telling them what you think they should do or what you would do, asking helpful questions, remembering that you young people probably have the answers themselves, you could ask them, what have you already tried?



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[01:35:17.790] - Kianna Bermudez

Have you ever had a similar problem? What worked for you then? Do you need more information? Do you need more information to be able to solve this? Can I support you in getting what you need or want?

Thinking outside the box so you can offer information or practical help? You can offer to connect them to other adults or resources. So if you don't have the answer, you might have a best friend down the street that is a perfect person to talk to about this. How can you make sure you're leveraging some of that social capital? Can you give them a ride? Can you help them find a job? Can you work on their college essay with them? Can you throw around a baseball and get them distracted from something that they're really in their head about? Making sure you're thinking outside of the box of other ways that may be helpful in the situation, similar to what we were just talking about with connecting to other adults and resources. But broaden that web of relationships. How can you connect them to others who share that same interest? Or even just folks who can expand their world?

[01:36:19.540] - Kianna Bermudez

You can ask about and encourage their development of meaningful relationships with adults. Maybe they're talking about, hey, I think my new coach is really cool, but I don't want to talk to them like, I'm a little intimidated. How can you encourage them to build that skill up and build those relationships with these other adults who could be really impactful in their lives? You can look up local and other resources together, so you can model this by sharing times that you've had to ask for help before because we've all had to do it. Youth want meaningful conversations and practical information about their concerns, so it's okay to Google it. As we said, we're not expected to always have all the answers, so this can include anything that you're unsure about. We actually have some resources to share regarding how to talk about sex ed, how to talk about drugs and alcohol and all these other tricky situations. I'm going to pass that to you all on the resources. Slide some resources on that. But if you all have any resources, feel free to throw them in the chat again. Youth want those meaningful conversations and practical information on how to handle some tricky situations as well.

[01:37:27.510] - Kianna Bermudez

And last but not least, again, in our theme, do not give up. Being a resource is ongoing. We are always learning, we're always developing our archives of ways that we can be resources. And so this is a great way for us to continue that work. So, again, you all, this is our last skill area. We are almost done. We're in the final stretch in the chat. I know you all love the chat today. In the chat, drop one of these tips, one of the ones bulleted there that you would like to circle back to. Thank you. Thank you. Break it down. That's good. Eli. Relationship Web. That's good. Awesome. Thank you all. Jessica. Yeah, that's a fun one. And it also shows them how, like, if they're not familiar with linking up resources, it's also teaching them a skill. All right, friends, so remember those fun little wordles we were checking out at the beginning? We were having all those tech issues. We're going back to them, so we're going back to one of them. This might look a little familiar because we were staring at it earlier. So one of these topics out of one of the ones you see here, these are specifically the ones in purple, I believe, or most of them in general.



[01:39:13.880] - Kianna Bermudez

I think I'm wrong about them being purple. These are topics that young people wanted to talk about with their askable adults and wanted to be able to talk about with askable adults. Of the ones you see above, of the topics that are important to youth, which one of these would you want to learn more about? And again, if you have a resource for what that item is, drop it in the chat. But of one of these, which one do you want to learn more about? Unmute. Put it in the chat. Let's work together to make sure that we are prepared to be askable adults. How you're feeling? Okay. Family struggles. Yeah. Gender dysphoria, sexuality and bullying. Good. All right. And if you all have any resources, feel free to put those in the chat. As you all are still putting those in, we're going to talk a little bit about how to explore some possibilities and actions for that. So how can we be more askable for the young people in our lives? Thank you. So this is some, again, homework. Take a picture of this or write them down. But we're going to talk about some personal commitments.

[01:41:21.020] - Kianna Bermudez

How can we make sure that what we're learning here today actually goes somewhere, that we actually do something with it? As Renee said, y'all will get these slides, but get out a piece of paper if you have it or take a picture on your phone. I have my paper here that you can't see. There we go. And write down some of these commitments. This is some good homework for you all to do, but just want to leave this on the screen for you all. And if there's something that you immediately are like, yeah, this is a skill I need to work on. Feel free to let us know. I know we are coming up on time, so I want to make sure you all have all the resources you need. Moving on to our resources slide, here are some resources for how to talk to young people about really hard things. So how to talk to young people about drugs and alcohol, sexuality and sex ed, romantic relationships, managing stress at home school with their everyday lives, some mindfulness things. Again, you all will be getting these slides. All these links are clickable. If you all have any additional resources, feel free to share them.

[01:42:37.430] - Kianna Bermudez

I just wanted to make sure you all had these and saw these. And that is really all I have for you all today. So we're going to move on to just opening up for any questions, opening up some discussion. If you all have anything you want to chat about, going to turn it over to you all.

[01:43:01.910] - Attendee

I have a quick, practical question. I feel like in my mentoring, I feel like sometimes my mentee has really amazing questions, but sometimes also is not in the headspace for it. Maybe has, like, a mind. They're very much tell, like, well, jumping from one thing to the next or just very distracted. How do you get the



mentee to just slow down mental and just relax? And not even that. They're anxious. I'm just marching like, well, what are my friends texting me? And what's happening here? What's happening there?

[01:43:33.310] - Kianna Bermudez

Yeah, like overstimulation. Yeah, it depends on the young person. I think that's a great conversation to have with them, just being honest and direct about that and being like, hey, it sounds like you have a lot going on right now. What do you need to make sure? What do you want to focus on right now? How can we make sure this is a fruitful conversation for you and even providing them some of those resources? So in the resources tab, we actually had some mindfulness activities and such and managed stress management plans and stuff like that. If that's something that they're open to, exploring that with them. Maybe they've never explored what things ground them. Maybe they've never done meditation exercises, and that's something they would like. Maybe they just want to sit and zone out on their phone. And that's okay, too, but making sure you're having a conversation to see. Hey, what do you need right now? And how can we make sure you're meeting that need? Yeah, does anyone else have any tips for Marcus? Again, I'm just the facilitator here. I'm not the expert. Any other questions or things people want to chat about?

[01:44:58.800] - Kianna Bermudez

All right, well, I'll take that. As I answered all your questions, I did a wonderful job. But again, thank you for coming. Thank you for reflecting and sharing, and for your commitment to strengthening your relationship with youth. We would love to stay connected with you. So in the chat, we'll drop some ways to stay connected with my email, our newsletter, all of that stuff. But if you'll ever have any questions, please feel free to reach out, and we'll hang out for a little bit if you all have any more questions as well. Thank you.

[01:45:40.720] - Attendee

I guess before I. Oh, cool. But before I do get going. We'll be able to access this presentation, right? You're muted.

[01:45:53.240] - Kianna Bermudez

Got it. We'll make sure we share it with. Right. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for being here, Eli.

[01:46:01.040] - Attendee

No problem. Have a good rest of your day.

[01:46:03.370] - Kianna Bermudez

You too.



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